Student - Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

Pre-Departure 2
1. What documents should I receive from Gap Africa? 2
2. What travel documents are required? 2
3. What vaccinations are recommended? 2
4. Do we require travel insurance? 2
5. Where can I find the kit list? 3
6. What luggage allowance do I have? 3
7. When is my next payment due? 3
Health and Safety 3
8. Should I bring a first aid kit with me? 3
9. What are the emergency procedures and contacts? 3
10. What is the procedure for reporting incidents or issues during the trip? 4
11. What happens if I require a doctor or hospital? 4
Whilst On Project 4
12. Are there opportunities for swimming? 4
13. Are there any specific cultural considerations for the trip? 4
14. Mobile Phone and Wi-Fi 4
15. I'm a fussy eater what food will there be? 5
16. How is accommodation arranged? 5
17. How much spending money should I bring? 5
18. Am I expected to tip? 5
19. What will the weather be like? 5
20. Can we drink the water? 6
21. Are there laundry facilities 6
22. Is drinking alcohol allowed? 6
23. What travel adapter /plug will I need? 6
24. How to support students who may be menstruating during the trip 6
Appendix 1 7

Pre-Departure

1. What documents should I receive from Gap Africa?

You should receive a confirmation email, which contains an invoice (bank details can be found on your invoice) and confirmation letter which includes a link to the group webpage.

Documents included on the group webpage will be:

- Information Pack – contains a kit list
- Pre-Departure Pack – contains a kit list
- Travel Plan

After you have a made a payment you will receive an updated invoice. Two weeks before travelling final documents and e tickets will be emailed to you.

2. What travel documents are required?

Students must have valid passports. UK passport holders do not require a visa to enter Costa Rica. Any student travelling on a non-UK passport should confirm any VISA requirements with the Costa Rica Embassy before travel.

https://www.worldtravelguide.net/guides/north-america/costa-rica/passport-visa/

Depending on your flight routing, if you are travelling via Canada or the USA you will need to arrange an ETA/ESTA transit visa.

3. What vaccinations are recommended?

We recommend consulting your GP or travel clinic or this website

https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/58/costa-rica

4. Do we require travel insurance?

All travellers must have travel insurance which includes all activities – True Traveller is our preferred supplier, you should select 'Adventure Pack' which covers all activities.

5. Where can I find the kit list?

The kit list can be found in the information pack and pre-departure packs on the group webpage.

6. What luggage allowance do I have?

Your luggage allowance depends on which airline you are travelling with. Details can be found on the pre-departure pack found on the group's web page. If you are over your baggage allowance you will be responsible for any charges.

7. When is my next payment due?

For details relating to payments please see your most recent invoice. Please let us know if you require a new copy.

Health and Safety

8. Should I bring a first aid kit with me?

We recommend you carry a basic first-aid kit with you. Basic items such as plasters, paracetamol, ibuprofen, **rehydration tablets and Imodium** can be very useful whilst on the project.

Basic first aid will be available and emergency procedures will be communicated to you. Please note that staff at the projects are unable to give out any medication.

Any prescription medication should be in its original packaging and consider having a doctor's letter as well. Ensure that all prescription medication is carried in your hand luggage.

9. What are the emergency procedures and contacts?

Emergency contacts are provided on the pre-departure packs. Tutors will have details of emergency procedures.

Emergency procedures will also be included in the arrival briefing.

10. What is the procedure for reporting incidents or issues during the trip?

Any incidents or concerns should be reported to your tutors in the first instance. Your tutor will then communicate with the project staff to resolve any issues.

11. What happens if I require a doctor or hospital?

Firstly, ensure you have spoken to your tutor, staff at your project will be able to assist in ensuring that you gain access to medical care as required. You would need to pay for transport from the project to the doctor or hospital. All payments would need to be paid locally. Only initial emergency medical treatment is available without charge for visitors. Subsequent treatment will be charged.

You must ensure you follow the guidance as set out on your insurance policy to ensure you can claim back any costs.

Whilst On Project

12. Are there opportunities for swimming?

At some hotels there is a swimming pool and you may have access to lakes/ /rivers/sea, however, you need to be aware that there are no lifeguards and limited/if any life-saving equipment. Your institution will issue guidance on using these facilities. The recommended kit list will advise if swimwear is applicable.

13. Are there any specific cultural considerations for the trip?

Respectful behaviour and cultural sensitivity are important throughout the trip; In particular, you should dress respectfully and short or revealing items should not be worn. Neutral colours are recommended whilst working on the project.

We recommend that students keep cash/mobile phones and valuables out of sight, particularly in and around towns.

14. Mobile Phone and Wi-Fi

Mobile phone signal is good at the accommodation in Esparza however please keep in mind any additional charges. Some Wi-Fi is provided at the accommodation in Esparza although it may not be up to UK speeds etc.. There is no reliable or standard Wi-Fi at the Pacuare Turtle Project.

15. I'm a fussy eater what food will there be?

Food at the projects will cater for genuine dietary requirements and allergies however the project cannot cater for "fussy eater". There will be a selection of local food, generally this will be rice and beans. If you believe that you will struggle you should take items such as noodles / breakfast bars etc. with you.

There is not a shop at the Turtle Project so you must ensure you bring any snacks / drinks with you. There may be an opportunity to stop at a local shop, however this is not guaranteed.

Note: We must know of any dietary requirements and allergies at least 6 weeks before departure.

16. How is accommodation arranged?

Students will stay in shared accommodation; this is normally allocated with your tutors before travelling.

17. How much spending money should I bring?

It is hard to answer, you will need to check the inclusions/exclusions to see if any meals are not included and take this into account, there will be information in the pre-departure pack . There may be opportunities to spend money at the local shops and café/restaurants. Smaller communities and villages will only take cash. Card and Apple/Android pay are widely accepted, please be aware of additional bank charges. We recommend that students do not bring large amounts of cash, rather use Card and Apple/android pay.

18. Am I expected to tip?

Whilst there is no obligation, it is a nice gesture to show your appreciation for the housekeeping staff by leaving a small tip/donation for the staff when you leave; any amount is always appreciated this should be given to the project coordinator. In cafes/restaurants 10% is normal.

19. What will the weather be like?

There is information on the pre-departure pack, also see link below to AccuWeather.

- Costa Rica

20. Can we drink the water?

You can drink the water, during your induction/orientation session this will be explained to you. It is important to ensure you are drinking plenty of water to keep hydrated. Please bring dissolvable sterilising tablets to clean your water bottle.

21. Are there laundry facilities

There aren't any laundry facilities/service at the project.

22. Is drinking alcohol allowed?

This is subject to your individual college/institution policy on alcohol; we recommend you confirm this before travelling. Most projects have the option of stopping at off-licenses if required. Any form of inebriation is not acceptable, please refer to the student guidelines document.

23. What travel adapter /plug will I need?

It is important to ensure you take the right travel adapter so you can charge your phone, and other devices, whilst away. Follow this link to access a map showing the most commonly used plug types.
https://www.kayavolunteer.com/international-guide-to-travel-adapters-plugs/

24. How to support students who may be menstruating during the trip

The accommodation has closed bins in the bathrooms that can be used to dispose of sanitary items. These must NOT be flushed down the toilet.

Students must bring sanitary products with them, menstrual cycles can change, you should also bring items that can hold used sanitary products until there is a suitable place to dispose of them.; nappy bags are a good idea, also have tissues or wipes and some hand sanitiser if you need to change your sanitary product during the day.

Don't forget, all the staff are experienced in these matters and students should try not to feel embarrassed about being honest about their needs if their period comes whilst they are away.

Appendix 1

Location	Wi-Fi	Phone Signal (tested using Vodafone)	Access to Swimming	Laundry	Proximity to nearest Private Hospital	Nearest Town	Electricity	ATMS / Cash Machine
Esparza	Fair	Yes	Yes	No	80km (1.5 hours) to San José	N/A as Esparza is a city	Hydroelectric	Yes
Natuwa Wildlife Reserve	Limited	Patchy	No	Yes	20km (0.5 hours) to Puntarenas	Aranjuez	Limited off grid solar power	No
Pacuare Turtle Project	No	Patchy	Yes	No	1500km (3 hours) to San José	Tortuguero	Limited off grid solar power	No